

FROM THE BOOKSHELF #123
TAKIS KLADAKIS/J. CLADES

JANUARY 13, 1976

THE END OF LIBERALISM BY THEODORE LOWI

ANNCR: THE VOICE OF AMERICA BRINGS YOU ANOTHER IN THE WEEKLY SERIES FROM THE BOOKSHELF IN WHICH WE REVIEW SOME OF THE BOOKS AMERICANS ARE READING. TODAY, THE END OF LIBERALISM, BY THEODORE J. LOWI, PUBLISHED BY NORTON HERE IS BOOK EDITOR _____ WITH JOHN CLADES REVIEW.

VOICE: "LIBERALISM, WHICH IN THEORY HAS DOMINATED THE GOVERNMENT POLICY FOR DECADES, HAS NOT REALLY BEEN PUT INTO PRACTICE".

WITH THIS SALVO PROFESSOR THEODORE LOWI, A POLITICAL SCIENTIST AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO, LAUNCHES HIS ASSAULT AGAINST THE MODERN LIBERAL STATE, AGAINST CONTEMPORARY LIBERAL GOVERNMENT.

DOCTOR LOWI BELIEVES THERE IS A CRISIS OF PUBLIC AUTHORITY IN AMERICA, AND THAT IT STEMS FROM THE DOMINANT POLITICAL IDEOLOGY OF THE LAST FORTY YEARS.

AMERICANS ARE LIVING IN A DECADE OF CRISIS DOCTOR LOWI WRITES. HE ARGUES THAT THE VALUES WHICH AROSE OUT THE GREAT DEPRESSION OF THE 1930S HAVE ERODED. AND HE SAYS TODAY'S CRISIS IN CONFIDENCE IS ROOTED, NOT IN THE BITTERNESS OF THE VIETNAM WAR OR OTHER CONTEMPORARY ISSUES, BUT IN THE SHORTCOMINGS OF THE LIBERAL STATES •

VOICE:
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WHAT ARGUMENTS DOES DOCTOR LOWI PRESENT TO SUPPORT HIS THEORY? AS AN INTRODUCTION HE GOES BACK TO THE NINETEENTH CENTURY, TO A TIME WHEN CRITICS SAID THE CAPITALISTIC IDEOLOGY COULD NOT LAST UNLESS IT COULD ACCEPT SOCIAL CONTROLS BEYOND SIMPLE COMPETITION. THAT WAS A TIME WHEN CAPITALISTS BELIEVED THAT POWER AND CONTROL -- TWO INSTRUMENTS OF THE STATE -- SHOULD BE FEARED AND RESISTED.

IN THAT ERA, DOCTOR LOWI WRITES, THE IDEA OF PLURALISM CAME INTO EXISTENCE -- SOMETHING MANY PEOPLE CALLED THE IDEOLOGICAL OPPOSITE TO CAPITALISM. PLURALISM MEANT THERE WOULD BE MANY GROUPS TO COMPETE FOR GOVERNMENT'S FAVORS.

THEN, THE COUNTRY WENT THROUGH THE DEPRESSION AND IN 1933 THE NEW DEAL WAS LAUNCHED. THE LIBERALS -- IN FAVOR OF STRONG AND BIG GOVERNMENT -- WERE IN CONTROL. DOCTOR LOWI BELIEVES THAT WHEN THE LIBERALS CAME TO POWER IN THE UNITED STATES THEY BECAME PRISONERS OF THEIR OWN BELIEFS. THEY TURNED TO BE AS ANTI-GOVERNMENT AS THE CAPITALISTS. THUS CAPITALISM AND LIBERALISM BECAME FUSED AND CREATED WHAT HE CALLS: INTEREST-GROUP LIBERALISM OF THE PERIOD AFTER 1937.

DOCTOR LOWI SUGGESTS MANY REASONS FOR THIS DEVELOPMENT: THAT THE LIBERALS IN GOVERNMENT HAD TO SHARE POWER AND INFLUENCE BECAUSE OF THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS IN THE UNITED STATES; SOME RAPPORT HAD TO BE ESTABLISHED WITH

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THE PRIVATE GROUPS TO BE AFFECTED BY GOVERNMENT POLICIES;
AND THAT THE PREVAILING BELIEF WAS THAT OUT OF THE CLASH
OF SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS EMERGES THE COMMON INTEREST.

PROFESSOR LOWI THINKS THAT THIS NEW PUBLIC PHILOSOPHY,
THIS INTEREST-GROUP LIBERALISM, HAS TRIED TO SOLVE THE
PROBLEMS OF PUBLIC AUTHORITY BY FOLLOWING A STRANGE
ROAD: BY DEFINING THEM AWAY. AND HE SAYS THAT WHILE
THE GOVERNMENT INCREASED IN SIZE AND ACTIVITIES IN
REALITY ITS POWER HAS BEEN PARCELED OUT TO A VARIETY
OF ORGANIZED SPECIAL INTERESTS, SOME OLD, SOME NEW
AND BETTER ORGANIZED.

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IN HIS STUDY, DOCTOR LOWI ANALYZES U-S FEDERAL PROGRAMS
RANGING FROM SOCIAL SECURITY TO PUBLIC HOUSING, TO
TELECOMMUNICATIONS. HE SCRUTINIZES THE KEY POLICIES
OF THE POST-WORLD WAR TWO PERIOD IN VIRTUALLY EVERY
AREA OF GOVERNMENTAL ACTIVITY.

HIS CONCLUSION IS TWO FOLD -- FIRST ORGANIZED SPECIAL
INTERESTS DETERMINE THE GOVERNMENT POLICIES AND NOT
THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AS COMMONLY BELIEVED AND, SECOND
THAT THERE IS ACTUALLY AN EROSION OF FEDERAL POWER DUE
TO THE CONSTANT DELEGATION OF POWER FROM HIGHER TO
LOWER LEVELS.

WHAT REMEDY DOES DOCTOR LOWI SUGGEST? "HE WANTS ATTENTION
THE RETURN TO OLDER AND ALMOST FORGOTTEN ISSUES: WHAT
KIND OF GOVERNMENT? WHAT FORMS OF GOVERNMENT? WHAT
CONSEQUENCES OF GOVERNMENT". HE WANTS MORE GOVERNMENT,

VOICE:
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BUT GOVERNMENT OPERATING WITH A GROUP OF SUPER CIVIL SERVANTS, COMPOSED OF GENERALISTS WITH TIES TO NO SINGLE GOVERNMENT AGENCY, WHO WILL PROVIDE WHAT HE CALLS "A PROPER CENTRALIZATION OF THE DEMOCRATIC ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESS". HE SEES THESE PEOPLE AS A GROUP THAT WOULD HELP CONGRESS WRITE GOOD LAWS AND PROVIDE BETTER CONTROLS FOR THE VARIOUS PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS BY OVERHAULING THEM FROM TIME TO TIME OR BY ELIMINATING THEM.

ANNCR: YOU HAVE BEEN LISTENING TO A REVIEW OF THE END OF LIBERALISM BY PROFESSOR THEODORE J. LOWI, OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO. WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN US NEXT WEEK (AT THIS SAME TIME) WHEN THE VOICE OF AMERICA WILL BRING YOU ANOTHER REVIEW OF ONE OF THE MANY BOOKS AMERICANS ARE CHOOSING...FROM THE BOOKSHELF. THIS IS

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